

## OCTOBER 2011

*This newsletter is sent to General Managers and to Water and Sewer Managers in 103 regional Councils in NSW and also to over 140 contacts in government departments and private industry across Australia.*

### PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION'S FINAL REPORT OF ITS INQUIRY INTO AUSTRALIA'S URBAN WATER SECTOR

In October the Australian Government released the Productivity Commission's final report on its inquiry into Australia's urban water sector. The report follows a year-long inquiry established to consider the case for further reform in the sector.

Parliamentary Secretary for Sustainability and Urban Water, Senator Don Farrell, said the urban water sector plays an important role in providing the vast majority of drinking water, recycled water and wastewater services in Australia.

"The sector employs 40,000 people in more than 250 utilities and local governments, delivering secure, good quality water supplies for Australian households and industries," he said.

The Productivity Commission found that efficiency gains are likely to come from a range of areas, such as improving the performance of institutions, transparent and consistent regulation, and competitive procurement of supply and pricing, with the benefits of reform expected to flow to consumers and communities.

Senator Farrell said that as Australian cities continue to grow and rainfall patterns are more uncertain, long term water security is a high priority that cannot be achieved by relying on rainfall alone.

"In the face of severe drought the Australian Government has helped support state, territory and local governments as they acted to secure their communities' water needs," he said.

"Inflows into dams and reservoirs fell significantly during the drought. Governments responded with water efficient technologies and new projects to ensure rainfall-independent water supplies.

"The Australian Government is committed to working closely with the states and territories on water reform and this report will help to map out a plan for future water management priorities.

"Securing safe and affordable urban water supplies is an ongoing and long-term objective for us all.

"I was pleased to see that so many individuals, businesses and organisations from all over Australia participated in the inquiry, with 167 submissions being received."

The Productivity Commission inquiry to identify future opportunities for improved efficiency in the sector was established as part of the Council of Australian Government's water reform

program, agreed by all state and territory governments.

"The report provides a useful contribution to further discussion with the states and territories on the next steps in building a future national work program for water reform," Senator Farrell said.

To download a copy of the report or order a hard copy please go to [www.pc.gov.au/projects/inquiry/urban-water/report](http://www.pc.gov.au/projects/inquiry/urban-water/report)

### NOMINATIONS ARE OPEN FOR THE 2012 NSW OPERATOR OF THE YEAR

The Water Directorate is pleased to sponsor this prestigious award which recognises commitment to the job, innovation, initiative and achievements.

If you know someone within NSW that fits the bill then please nominate them today. The award includes a set of trophies as well as joining the WIOA tour group to attend a New Zealand conference.

An application form can be downloaded from [www.waterdirectorate.asn.au/downloads/NSW\\_WD\\_Op\\_Year\\_Application\\_2012.pdf](http://www.waterdirectorate.asn.au/downloads/NSW_WD_Op_Year_Application_2012.pdf)

### CALL FOR PAPERS NOW OPEN FOR THE 2012 NSW WIOA CONFERENCE

The 6th Annual WIOA NSW Water Industry Engineers & Operators Conference will be held on 28 and 29 March 2012 in Tamworth. The Call for Papers is now open.

Abstract submission details can be downloaded from [www.wioa.org.au/2012conferences/documents/CallForPapersNSW2012.pdf](http://www.wioa.org.au/2012conferences/documents/CallForPapersNSW2012.pdf)



Australia's Urban  
Water Sector

Productivity Commission  
Inquiry Report  
Volume 1

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## PRACTICAL GUIDE TO ODOUR CONTROL IN SEWAGE TRANSPORT SYSTEMS

The *Practical Guide to Odour Control in Sewage Transport Systems*, the first title in WIOA's new series of wastewater books, is now in stock. Like the water series, the books are retailing for \$33 (incl GST). Order forms can be obtained from the home page of the WIOA website.

As with the previous five WIOA Practical Guides, the Water Directorate will purchase a gratis copy for all of our financial member Councils and distribute the publication in November.

## LAND MATTERS GUIDELINES - STAGE 1

The Water Directorate's latest technical publication is a joint project with the Roads and Transport Directorate. The *Land Matters Guidelines - Stage 1* was prepared by Maddocks Lawyers and provides guidance on many aspects of land acquisition for water, sewer and road infrastructure.

The document was officially launched at the Property Officers Conference at Forbes in mid October and it will be distributed to Water Directorate financial member Councils in early November.

## DRINKING WATER GUIDELINES AND COMMUNITY WATER PLANNER

Two resources designed to ensure Australian water derived from any source is clean and safe to drink were released by the National Health and Medical Research Council in October. NHMRC released the 2011 version of *Australian Drinking Water Guidelines (ADWG)* and the *Australian Drinking Water Guidelines: Community Water Planner (CWP)* on 28 October.

The ADWG provides the Australian community and the water supply industry with guidance on what constitutes good quality drinking water. The 2011 version of the ADWG is only available electronically via the following link: [www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications/synopses/eh19syn.htm](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications/synopses/eh19syn.htm)

The CWP is a web based tool that will assist local drinking water managers to develop drinking water risk management plans tailored to their community based on user input. The CWP covers microbial, physical, chemical and radiological risks and is available at [www.communitywaterplanner.gov.au/login?return](http://www.communitywaterplanner.gov.au/login?return)

For more information please contact Heather Bishop, Assistant Director, Emerging Issues National Health & Medical Research Council on 02 6217 9476 or [heather.bishop@nhmrc.gov.au](mailto:heather.bishop@nhmrc.gov.au)

## IQPC INTEGRATED URBAN WATER MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE & WORKSHOPS, 30 NOVEMBER – 1 DECEMBER, MELBOURNE

The theme of the International Quality & Productivity Centre's conference and workshop is preparing for growing populations and planning for water security in urban and rural areas. For more information contact Shivani Shand, Marketing Manager, on 9229 1041 or [shivani.nand@iqpc.com.au](mailto:shivani.nand@iqpc.com.au)

## 7TH ANNUAL WATER SYMPOSIUM, 24 FEBRUARY 2012, SYDNEY

Hear from 19 of the water industry's key influencers, including the Tony Windsor MP, the Chairs from the National Water Commission and the Murray-Darling Basin Authority.

With the Murray-Darling Draft Basin Plan consultation period drawing to an end and the release of the National Water Commission's Third Biennial Review, the 7th Water Symposium will explore the issues of delivering environmental efficiencies for rural Australia and ensuring productivity and sustainability in the urban water sector.

To receive a brochure email: [info@legalwiseseminars.com.au](mailto:info@legalwiseseminars.com.au) and for more information please contact Legalwise Seminars on 02 9387 8133. Please be advised registrations are open and our website is up and running at [www.legalwiseseminars.com.au/7th-annual-water-symposium](http://www.legalwiseseminars.com.au/7th-annual-water-symposium)

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING DATES

The Executive Committee has met in March, May, July and September in 2011. The last meeting dates for the year are 9-10 November for the Annual Planning Meeting, AGM and Executive Committee Meeting.

Thanks to those people who forwarded potential project topics for discussion at the 9 November Planning Meeting.

Two Executive Committee vacancies now exist for representatives from the Hunter group of Councils and from the South West group of Councils. If you are an experienced water professional and interested in strategic issues facing the NSW local water industry then please consider attending a future meeting as an observer to get an insight into the role.

## MEMBERSHIP FEES DUE

Member Councils that are still unfinancial for 2011/12 should rejoin if they wish to continue to receive the technical publications mentioned earlier in this newsletter, ie the Land Matters Guidelines and a gratis copy of WIOA's Practical Guide to Odour Control in Sewage Transport Systems.

Gary Mitchell  
Executive Officer  
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